



Representative Mark Ericks

2006 Session Preview

Winter 2006



Representative

Mark Ericks

1st. Legislative District
332 John L. O'Brien Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7900

E-mail:

ericks.mark@leg.wa.gov

Web Page:

<http://hdc.leg.wa.gov/members/ericks/>

Committees:

Capital Budget

Finance

Financial Institutions &
Insurance (Vice Chair)

Technology, Energy &
Communications

Dear Neighbors:

I want to thank you for the honor and privilege of representing you in Olympia. We are at the beginning of the session, so this is a good time to touch base with you. This newsletter is designed to give you a heads-up on what we're doing under the capitol dome.

I spent much of my first year in office talking to folks in our district, and people kept bringing up the same issues:

- Education and the WASL;
- Traffic problems;
- Economic growth and help for small businesses;
- Protecting our environment for future generations;
- Crime issues and Identity Theft;
- Health care.

The 1st District is my home, and where I raised my family. My service to you is defined by a vision of a stronger, more promising future for all Washingtonians, which is why I've made your concerns my priorities. Working together we can make this a better place to live, work and raise a family.

The key is to work together toward the same goal: a better Washington, and to get there I need your input. Keep in mind this is your legislature, so please share your thoughts, concerns and ideas with me.

Sincerely,

Representative Mark Ericks
1st Legislative District



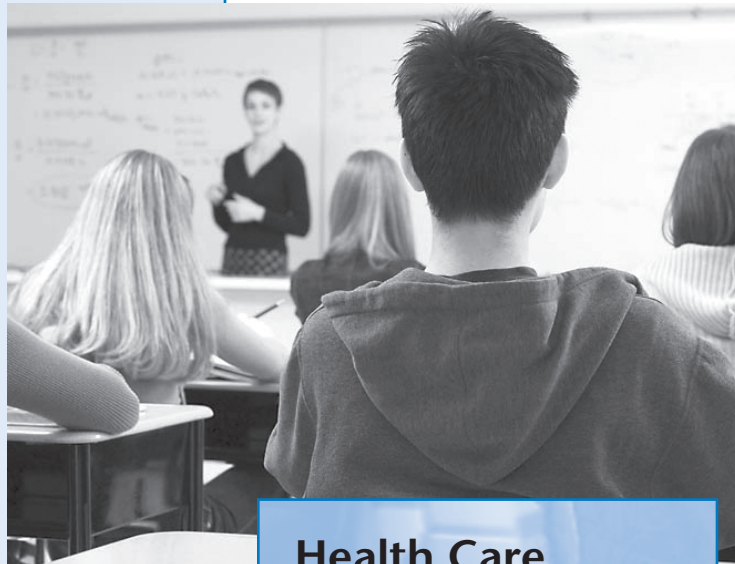
The federal Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Plan went into effect on January 1st. But you can enroll until May 15, 2006. If you need help choosing a plan, or have questions regarding this program, please call the State Insurance Commissioner's SHIBA line: 1(800) 562-6900

The WASL

Parents and students are worried about passing the Washington Assessment of Student Learning, which will be a graduation requirement starting in 2008. We need to look at reforms so kids that don't test well can pass this test. I support the concept of giving our local school districts money for summer school, intensive tutoring, and other focused learning opportunities for students who need help.

We will work on approving "alternative assessments" – that is, other ways for students to show they have the reading, writing and math skills tested in the WASL. One alternative will be a collection of student work; another will be a calculation of grades and WASL scores. These alternatives will be a big help for kids who just don't test well.

We want to do all we can to help every student meet the academic standards we have set. In today's economy students need higher levels of skill and knowledge. But we will be watching this issue closely to make sure that the WASL is fair, that all students have equal opportunities to learn, and that in 2008, every parent of a studious high school senior can attend a graduation ceremony.



Health Care

Last session we passed a bold reform making it our state's goal – and policy – to make sure every child in this state has health coverage.

We're making a lot of progress toward that goal. Tens of thousands of children who couldn't afford to see a doctor now have health coverage.

Just like a quality education, I think every child deserves to have access to health care. We have a duty as human beings to protect every child, no matter who they are, from getting hurt or sick. It is immoral to do otherwise.

Medical Malpractice

Now that voters rejected both medical malpractice initiatives, the 2006 Legislature will work on developing legislation regarding insurance reform, patient safety and civil justice reform.

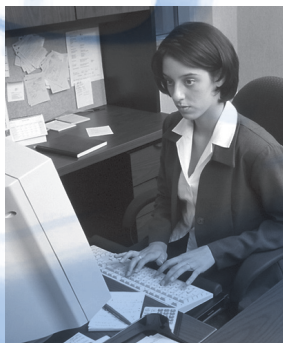
Economic growth

This fall Washington employers added 11,700 new jobs and the number of unemployed people fell by 7,900 compared to last year. We need to keep the economy moving in this direction.

As you know, there's a surplus in the state's revenue. This is good news, but we have to keep in mind this is the second year of the budget cycle, so we need to be very careful as to where and how we make new investments.

And we must also make sure we have sufficient reserves, in case we need them down the road.

I am sure we can reach a balance that keeps our economy strong and meets the needs of Washington's people. I support banking this surplus "windfall" to ensure stability in future budgets.



There were 5,654 victims of Identity Theft in Washington State last year. It has to stop.

- they wouldn't be able to have their records of conviction cleared;
- they could be subject to community placements or community custody; and
- they wouldn't qualify for up to 50% earned release time for good conduct.

But you can do a lot to not become a statistic:

- Make sure you shred all bank/credit documents before getting rid of them.
- Don't give out your personal information over the phone or as a response to an e-mail.
- Don't carry your Social Security card in your wallet.
- Memorize your credit/debit card PIN, don't write it down on a little paper and carry it around.
- Order a copy of your credit reports and look for any red flags like charges for things you never bought or accounts you never opened.

If you are an Identity Theft victim, go to the Attorney General's website (www.atg.wa.gov) for detailed information on how to protect your data, and a step-by-step process to follow to get your life back.



Drop me a line with your
comments, suggestions and ideas.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Name: _____

E-mail:



When you buy a product it's supposed to work. Particularly when it comes to insurance, it better work! But that's not always the case. Last spring 60-year old Ethel Adams –who is now in a wheelchair- found herself in a 5-car wreck, and her insurance company wouldn't cover anything because they said it hadn't been an accident.

Nobody should have to go through this sort of thing. It's unreasonable, it's unjust and it's downright wrong. That's why I'm sponsoring HB 2415, which defines the term "accident" as an unexpected and unintended occurrence by the insured person.

I want to make sure responsible, insured drivers have the certainty and the peace of mind that if they are ever caught in a road wreck they didn't intend and were certainly not expecting, their insurance company will step up to the plate.



Please
place
stamp
here



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What do you think?
I'm interested in your thoughts and opinions. Please take a minute to share your views.

Which of these are the most significant issues facing our state?
(Please rank these issues according to importance where 1 is the most important and 5 is the least important)

Please feel free to share your comments on the reverse page.

INSTRUCTIONS: Record your responses by shading the entire circle of your answer using a blue or black pen. Please do not write in the margins. Record any additional comments in the area provided on the back page. Thank you for providing me your valuable feedback.

Shade entire circle like this: ●

Not like this: ⊗ or this: ⊙

Mailing: After completing the survey, fold to expose return address panel, affix 39¢ stamp and mail.

	Voter 1					Voter 2				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
a) Higher education . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Fighting crime . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Economy and jobs . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Environment . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) Health care . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) K-12 Education . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g) Transportation . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
H) Other . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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